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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 943
By Herron

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize Captain Regina Kathryn Parham for her meritorious service and milestone accomplishments.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that this legislative body should pause to pay tribute to those exemplary individuals who, in their years of service, have performed with extraordinary dedication and devotion, and who through their special endeavors have distinguished themselves as credits to their country, respective families and communities, and to this state; and

WHEREAS, our country was conceived by individuals willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure this nation's greatness, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to have so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, Captain Regina Kathryn Parham, U.S. Army Reserves, Retired, is one such outstanding individual who has served her fellow citizens with courage and gallantry and is most deserving of special recognition; and

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WHEREAS, Captain Parham has the great distinction of being the state's first female to attend the Army Engineer Officer Course and U.S. Army Aviation School, in addition to serving as the first female aviator in the Tennessee Army National Guard; and

WHEREAS, Regina Parham follows in the footsteps of her mother, Virginia Loyd Parham, who was among a group of Tennessee high school science teachers who were invited to participate in flight training at Fort Campbell, Kentucky toward the latter part of World War II; and

WHEREAS, it was not until Ms. Parham was already rendering outstanding service as a member of the Tennessee National Guard that the seed for the desire to fly was first planted; and

WHEREAS, after she rode in a helicopter for the first time in 1976, Captain Parham knew that she was born to fly; and

WHEREAS, a native Tennessean, Ms. Parham graduated from Dresden High School in 1970 and the University of Tennessee at Martin in 1973 with a bachelor of science degree in law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from college, Regina Parham moved to Nashville and started working as a senior accounting clerk in the Facility Engineer Section of the state's Military Department; while she was employed at this position, Ms. Parham began her love affair with helicopters and flying; and

WHEREAS, Captain Parham began her illustrious career in the Tennessee National Guard in 1976, when she enlisted as an E-3 and rode in one of the helicopters that were located up the hill from her former job; and

WHEREAS, her inaugural helicopter ride was in an OH-6A and was the deciding factor in her decision to attend flight school; and

WHEREAS, upon obtaining direct commission to 2nd Lieutenant in the now disestablished Women's Army Corps, Regina Parham attended the last Women's Army Corps

Officer Orientation Course from July 17, 1977 until September 27, 1977; where she received permanent federal recognition of commission upon graduation; and

WHEREAS, after receiving her orders, Captain Parham was the first woman to attend the Engineer Officer Basic Course at Fort Belvoir, Virginia (November 11, through December 13, 1977); and

WHEREAS, she applied for flight training in the fall of 1979 and had to patiently wait for a year for her orders to report to Fort Rucker, because of the very limited number of slots awarded to candidates each year; during her long wait, Ms. Parham was promoted to the rank of 1st Lieutenant with permanent federal recognition in May of 1980; and

WHEREAS, Captain Parham achieved a significant milestone in Tennessee history when she began flight training on August 7, 1980 and became was the first female member of the Tennessee National Guard to complete such training in April of 1981; and

WHEREAS, while training at Fort Stewart in Georgia, Ms. Parham had the distinct honor of flying future governor, Ned McWherter, making her the first Tennessee National Guard pilot to fly a Commander-in-Chief; and

WHEREAS, after his flight with her as pilot, Governor McWherter spoke highly of Regina Parham, saying, "Regina is a living example of what a young lady can do—a credit to the Tennessee National Guard and to her country"; and

WHEREAS, after completing the necessary certifications and requirements, Regina Parham realized her dream of flying in the Instrument Division MOI on March 16, 1983; and

WHEREAS, on March 15, 1984, Ms. Parham transferred to the Inactive Army Reserve, where she was promoted to the rank of Captain on May 19 of that same year; and

WHEREAS, Captain Parham admirably served her country until July 20, 1991, when she received her honorable discharge from the U.S. Army Reserves; and

WHEREAS, during her peerless military career, Regina Parham logged an impressive 3208.3 hours of flight time, 142.5 hours of actual instrument time, and 2556.0 hours as an instructor; and

WHEREAS, she earned an impressive number of certificates and ratings, including commercial pilot, rotorcraft/helicopter, instrument/helicopter, CFI – Rotorcraft, FAA Class II Medical, and an FCC Restricted Radio Telephone Operator Permit; and

WHEREAS, in addition, Captain Parham is also qualified to fly the Bell 205 (UH-1), Hughes 269 (TH-55), Robinson R-22, Hughes 500 (OH6-A, 25 hours CP only), ASEL 4.0 and AMEL 1.4 aircrafts; and

WHEREAS, she was also the deserving recipient of the First Army Energy Conservation Award and the Secretary of the Army's Energy Conservation Award; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of her pioneering efforts and exemplary service, the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum will detail Ms. Parham's sterling career as the first female helicopter pilot of the Tennessee Army National Guard in its archives as part of its "Women in Aviation" exhibit; and

WHEREAS, Regina Parham truly exemplifies the spirit and dedication that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Parham is a hardworking, dedicated citizen who has performed her duties with exceptional skill and creativity, and she should be recognized as the perfect example of a person totally committed to the highest ideals of public service; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we hereby honor and commend Captain Regina Kathryn Parham upon being as the first female in the Tennessee Air National Guard to attend the U.S. Army Engineer School and the U.S. Army Aviation School and to become an aviator/helicopter pilot and salute her meritorious service to the State of Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.